

## **Historic, archived document**

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

# U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

FARMERS' BULLETIN No. 1503 *rev.*  
*Mar. 1931*

## *The* HORSE BOTS AND THEIR CONTROL



**T**HREE KINDS OF HORSE BOTS cause considerable loss to farmers and horse breeders in the United States. Botflies seriously annoy horses and mules and often make them uncontrollable. The nose botfly is the most troublesome. Although this species is restricted to the North Central and the northern Rocky Mountain States, it is gradually spreading, and steps should be taken to control it. Horse bots attach themselves to the walls of the stomach and intestine and not only interfere with digestion but may actually cause stoppage, resulting in death.

For animals in harness a strip of belting suspended beneath the lips of the horse simply and effectively reduces annoyance from the nose botfly. A special protector has been devised for use on horses on pasture. The internal treatment of all horses and colts in December or January with carbon disulphide, and at the same time the application of a carbolic wash to destroy the eggs, will control all three kinds of bots. For the best results and to avoid injury this treatment must be properly administered. Suggestions for control or eradication of horse bots by community effort are also outlined in this bulletin.

Washington, D. C.

Issued September, 1926  
Revised March, 1931

# THE HORSE BOTS AND THEIR CONTROL

By F. C. BISHOPP, *Principal Entomologist, in charge*, and W. E. DOVE, *Entomologist, Division of Insects Affecting Man and Animals, Bureau of Entomology*

## CONTENTS

	Page		Page
Kinds of botflies and where they occur-----	1	How to combat horse bots—Contd.	9
How horse bots cause loss-----	2	Use of repellents-----	9
Newly hatched bots may invade human skin-----	5	Protective devices-----	9
Seasonal history-----	5	Removal of nose bots from the rectum-----	11
Life history and habits-----	5	Destruction of botfly eggs-----	11
Factors which control botflies in nature-----	8	Administration of carbon disulphide to horses for the destruction of bots-----	12
How to combat horse bots-----	9	Community effort in bot control-----	13

**C**ONTROL of horse bots has been given very little attention until recently, when a species known as the “nose fly” began to spread over the North Central States. The acute annoyance of this invader caused many horse raisers and farmers to give thought to the question of control of all kinds of horse bots. Investigations made a few years ago by the junior author and by Dr. Maurice C. Hall, of the Bureau of Animal Industry, clearly point to a very effective and economical treatment for the control or even eradication of these troublesome parasites.

## KINDS OF BOTFLIES AND WHERE THEY OCCUR

There are three distinct species of horse bots in the United States, the largest and most widely distributed being known as the common botfly or nit fly. This species<sup>1</sup> varies in abundance but is present in practically all parts of the United States. It is the least annoying of the three species at the time its eggs are laid, since it places most of them on the hairs of the legs. The fly hovers about the horse and is comparatively easy to capture or kill. Its body is covered with bands of black and yellow hair, and the wings bear mottled markings.

The so-called chin fly, or throat botfly,<sup>2</sup> is almost as widely distributed, and is especially abundant in the Rocky Mountain region. This fly is much more annoying than the common botfly, as it lays most of its eggs under the jaws of the horse. This fly is smaller than the common botfly, the wings are free from markings, and the flight is more rapid, except when the insect poises in mid-air preparatory to striking the animal under the jaw.

<sup>1</sup> Known scientifically as *Gastrophilus intestinalis* De Geer, and formerly known as *G. equi*.

<sup>2</sup> *Gastrophilus nasalis* L.

The nose fly<sup>3</sup> is confined principally to the North Central and certain of the Rocky Mountain States, but is gradually spreading in all directions. (Fig. 1.) It is the smallest of the three species, and is much darker than the others, most of the hair on its body being black. The abdomen has a distinct yellow band across its base and a bright orange tip. The wings are free from markings.

#### HOW HORSE BOTS CAUSE LOSS

Extreme annoyance is caused during egg laying, the "nose botfly" being the greatest offender. None of these botflies sting, but the horse's instinctive fear of them and the tickling of the insect as it attaches its eggs to the hair on the edge of the lip may cause the most docile animal to become absolutely uncontrollable. Whatever the species of the botfly, the degree of annoyance when the eggs are laid

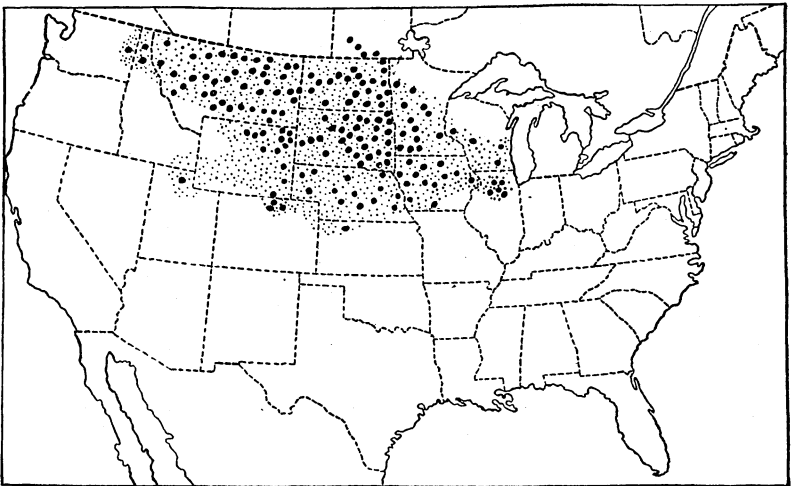


FIGURE 1.—Map showing distribution of the nose botfly in the United States. The large dots indicate localities from which the insect has been reported; small dots indicate its probable distribution

depends to some extent upon the temperament of the horse attacked. During warm days of sunshine which are favorable for the activity of botflies, horses are fighting from early morning until late afternoon, and are unable to graze, even for short periods.

The actions of pastured horses in seeking protection are very characteristic. They come together in shade or upon high ground where the wind blows, and stand in positions calculated to protect them from attack. The presence of nose botflies is indicated when the horses rest their lips upon each others' backs. (Fig. 2.) If the throat botfly is causing the annoyance the horses place their heads over each other so as to protect the underside of the jaws. (Fig. 3.) If they have an opportunity horses will enter barns or other places where they are not disturbed by the flies. Frequently they stand at watering tanks, and when attacked by nose botflies

<sup>3</sup> *Gastrophilus haemorrhoidalis* L.

they dip their lips into the water, then rub them violently against the wall of the tank. If sufficient protection is not obtained in some portion of the pasture, the animals walk about in search of places more favorable for natural protection. While so doing they con-

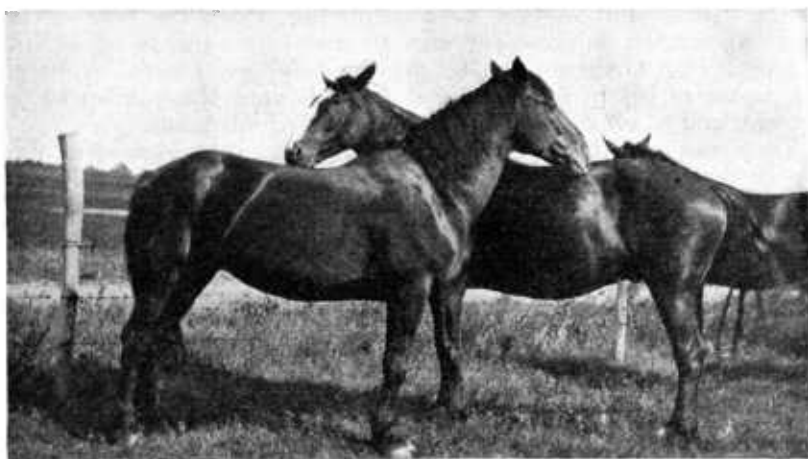


FIGURE 2.—Horses protecting their lips from nose botflies

stantly raise and lower the head, giving the appearance of nodding. This action does not always prevent the flies from depositing eggs, and when it fails the horses run from the flies. The grown animals usually run much faster than the colts, with the result that the latter

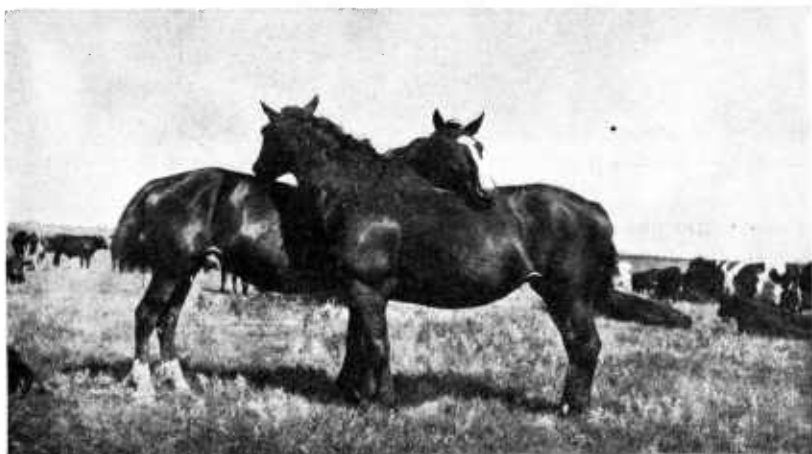


FIGURE 3.—Horses protecting their jaws from throat botflies

are heavily attacked. At times the colts avoid the flies to a considerable extent by lying down near older horses. Frequently the lips are rubbed violently on the ground, on barbed wire fences, or on other objects, producing cuts and bruises. Horses in harness, unless protected from the flies, often can not be controlled. Run-

always are not uncommon, and at times men are injured by the striking of the animals.

Although nearly all farmers and horse raisers know that botflies laying eggs cause annoyance to horses, few fully realize the injurious effects of the bot or maggot stage while it is attached to the stomach or intestines. For several months, during which the bots develop from an almost microscopic size to about two-thirds of an inch in length (fig. 4) these parasites may be doing great harm. Naturally the degree of injury to the animal depends upon the number of bots present, and to some extent upon the species concerned.

Numerous cases have been observed in which bots were attached in the duodenum, leading from the stomach, in such a way as to hinder



FIGURE 4.—Portion of horse's stomach, with bots and lesions caused by them. About two-thirds natural size

seriously the passage of food. Very commonly several hundred bots were found in a single animal. At an autopsy more than 1,000 were removed from the stomach of a colt. The attachment of these spiny bots to the lining of the stomach and intestines furnishes points where inflammatory processes are set up, causing more or less interference with digestion. (Fig. 4.) The nose-fly bots also attach themselves in the rectum and on the edge of the anus before they drop to the ground. While attached in these locations they are very annoying, and horses have been known to dislocate the bones of the tail in attempts to rub the affected parts.

In its earlier stages the throat bot frequently attaches itself in the throat or pharynx, and when numerous it may cause considerable irritation and swelling. In one case on record, observed by a veterinarian in Iowa, a mare died from these bots in the throat. For more than a month the animal had difficulty in eating and finally became unable to swallow food or water.

In certain sections where control work against horse bots has been in progress, many farmers declare that the number of cases of colic and other digestive disturbances has been greatly reduced, and that horses are kept in better flesh on the same feed than was possible before the control work began.

#### NEWLY HATCHED BOTS MAY INVADE HUMAN SKIN

In North Dakota, Nebraska, and Canada young bots have been recovered from "creeping" lesions of the human skin. The burrows produced by the young bots were slightly elevated, filled with a watery fluid, and resembled somewhat the burrows made by moles in meadows. The burrowing was rather extensive in some cases, and it was accompanied by an itching sensation. In the instances reported the young bots were removed surgically from the skin.

The manner in which the larvae entered the skin is not known, but in each instance the affected persons had worked with horses. It is possible that some of the botfly eggs hatched when in contact with a perspiring person, and that the young bots found abrasions in the skin which permitted them to gain entrance.

#### SEASONAL HISTORY

The adults of the three kinds of horse bots are active at about the same time of the year, but in South Dakota the nose botfly is the first to be observed. In this section it has been found that the botflies may appear shortly after the middle of June and that they are most abundant during July and the early part of August. In the Northern States the two common species of botflies appear by the first of July, but they are more numerous and troublesome to horses later in the fall. They are frequently annoying in warm periods following the first frosts, but usually disappear after a heavy freeze. The common botflies are observed in that section somewhat earlier in the summer than in the Southern States, but the period of activity is ended by killing frosts about October 1. The flies of this species are seldom seen in the South before August 1, although in western Texas they occasionally appear in April. In southern Texas they may be observed until the latter part of December.

The eggs are found on horses at the same time as the flies, except that in the case of the common horse bot the young maggots may remain alive in the eggs on the hair for several months. In South Dakota active larvae have been found in eggs collected from horses on pasture as late as December 1. At Dallas, Tex., active maggots were found in eggs on horses as late as February 23.

Bots may be found in the digestive tracts of horses at any time during the year, but usually the mature bots pass out by October 1. At that time and throughout the early part of the winter practically none but young bots are found.

#### LIFE HISTORY AND HABITS

All of the botflies are supplied with enough food from the maggot stage to enable them to develop and deposit their eggs. In fact, the sole purpose in life of these flies is reproduction, and they do not



have mouth parts adapted for feeding. Their lives are very short, lasting from a few days to about three weeks. The common botfly seems to live longest; the writers have recorded for this species a maximum longevity of 21 days. It is doubtful if, in warm weather, it ever lives longer than 10 days. The throat botfly lives from 3 to 12 days, and the nose botfly from 3 to 6 days. The females of the throat botfly and of the common botfly usually lay from 300 to 500 eggs each. The nose botfly is less prolific, the usual number of eggs which it is capable of laying being about 150.

The eggs of all three species of botflies are attached to hairs on the animal, but in shape and color the eggs vary considerably. (Fig. 5.) The egg of the common botfly is pale and is attached to the hair along its basal third, the free end of the egg slanting distinctly away from the hair to which it is attached. Often several eggs of this species are fastened to the same hair, especially on the long hair of the mane. In shape the egg of the throat botfly differs slightly from this, and it is attached to the hair along more than two-thirds of its length, its free end diverging but little from the hair bearing it. The egg of the nose botfly is black and it is drawn out at its lower end into a peculiar stalk, rough and closely clamped around a very short fine hair on the lips. The stalk enters the pit or follicle from which the hair arises and gives the impression that it is stuck into the skin.

When laying eggs, the common botfly usually remains about the horse almost continuously, flying from place to place as it cements egg after egg to the hairs. The abdomen is curved under in a characteristic position and the attachment of each egg takes but a second. Several eggs may be laid at one time, if the fly settles for an instant on the horse. The inner side of the knee appears to be the favorite place for attaching the eggs, but many are laid on the outside of the forelegs, on the shoulders, belly, neck, flanks, and some on the hind quarters.

The eggs of the common botfly do not hatch until they are rubbed or licked by the horse. The minute spiny maggots are ready for emergence from the egg in about seven days, but may lie dormant for several months. The horse in biting itself completes the hatching; the young bots are taken into the mouth, find their way to the stomach, and attach themselves to the white covering of the left sac.

The throat botfly has a more rapid flight than the common botfly. It usually poises in mid-air near the forelegs of the horse and then darts at the throat. From one to four eggs seem to be laid at one attack, the eggs being fastened singly to the hairs, the number depending on how quickly the fly is dislodged by the horse. After an attack the insect flies rapidly away, only to appear again in a few minutes and renew its attentions with undiminished vigor. Occasionally it lays an egg on a hair of the leg, shoulder, or flank.

It is not definitely known how the maggots of the throat botfly get into the animal. It has been found that the newly hatched maggots can burrow into the mucous membranes of the mouth, and it is possible that they may be able to work their way through the skin beneath the jaws. The eggs of this species hatch without friction or moisture. In some way the young bots find their way to the stomach, or occasionally attach themselves to the pharynx. Many of

the bots of this species pass through the stomach and find attachment in the first section of the intestine. Others are found in the pyloric or exit end of the stomach.

The flight of the nose botfly is even more rapid than that of the throat botfly. The female darts at the lips, deposits a single egg, then flies away for a few seconds, and again strikes the horse if the lips are not protected. The fly lays its eggs only around the muzzle, and, contrary to the belief of many, does not enter the nose.

The eggs are deposited on the edges of the lips of the horse, where they are moistened by saliva. Those nearest the edge have been observed to disappear first, usually in 5 or 6 days, whereas those an inch away may remain for as much as 18 days. Those attached some distance from the edges of the lips usually do not hatch. The eggshells do not remain attached long after hatching has occurred. The moisture and friction experienced by those laid near the edges of the lips hasten the hatching process, and it seems almost certain that the young maggots enter the mouth by their own action or with the food and water. The bots of this species attach themselves to various parts of the stomach, but are most abundant in that portion toward the exit. Some are also to be found in the first or duodenal section of the intestine. Unlike the bots of the other two species, however, some time before maturity the nose bots let go their hold on the walls of the stomach or upper intestine and pass into the rectum, where they again attach themselves. There seems to be a strong tendency toward a reattachment in the anus, where the bots remain for two or three days while they become accustomed to the air. The nose bots release their hold and drop off the anus at any time and are not normally passed out with the dung. The other two species pass out with the dung and are usually not noticed by the casual observer.

The bots of these three species, in the last stage of development, may be readily distinguished not only by the differences in the place of attachment, as described above, but by the spiny armature on the body rings. (Fig. 6.) Of the three species, when full grown, the common bot is the largest.

The exact nature of the food taken by the bots in the digestive tract of the horse is not known, but it is certain that they live to some extent at the expense of the host. The color of some of the bots, espe-

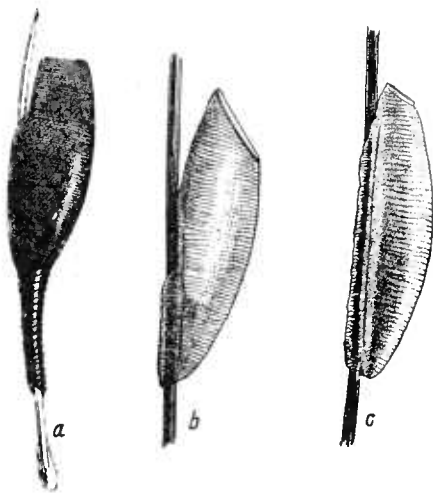


FIGURE 5.—Eggs of three species of botflies; *a*, nose-bot egg on hair removed with root; *b*, common horse-bot egg; *c*, throat-bot egg. Greatly enlarged.

cially when young, is distinctly reddish, indicating that they may partake of blood. When mature, the throat bots are dirty white or yellowish in color; the nose bots are pinkish until just before dropping from the animal, when they show a distinct greenish tint; and the common bots are yellowish, sometimes with a decided pink tinge.

Whatever the species, there is a tendency for the bots when they reach the ground to seek some protection. They crawl very little, and usually burrow into the soil only a sufficient depth to escape from the direct rays of the sun. When the bots are buried artificially, they always work their way up to a point near the surface before changing to the pupa or resting stage. In from one to three

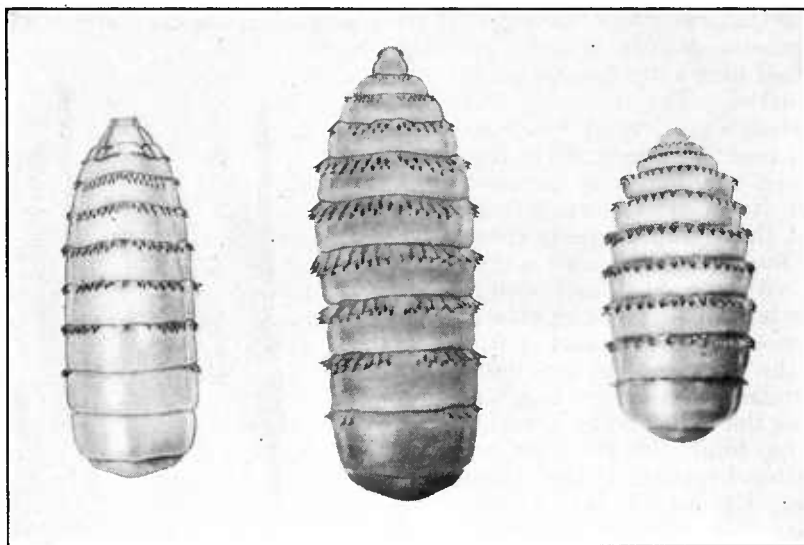


FIGURE 6.—Full-grown larvae of the three species of horse bots: At left, nose bot; in center, common bot; at right, throat bot. Three times natural size

or four days the outer skin hardens and forms a protective covering in which the change takes place from the bot to the fly. This pupal case is similar in shape to the bot, but varies in color from brown to black. The duration of the pupa or resting stage, according to temperature, is from 20 to 70 days, with no striking differences between the species.

#### FACTORS WHICH CONTROL BOTFLIES IN NATURE

It is certain that some of the bots which gain entrance to the digestive tract of the horse die and pass out before they mature, but it appears that the death rate within the animal is comparatively low. When bots drop to the ground they are exposed to various natural enemies and to adverse climatic conditions. Farm fowls and birds dispose of many in the maggot stage. During the resting stage some are destroyed by fowls and mice. Many bots which drop on hard, dry ground, as along roads, are destroyed by high temperatures, as they can not endure excessive heat for more than a few minutes. They are sensitive also to excessive moisture during their resting

period, and if kept continuously wet many of them die. Beyond doubt many of the bots which are covered deeply in manure piles perish from the heat of the manure. It appears from experiments that most of the bots which drop in fields and are immediately plowed under work their way to the surface before pupating, and successfully produce flies. The greater number of the bots do not leave the horses when low temperatures are prevalent, but those passed at such times do not survive severe freezes.

### HOW TO COMBAT HORSE BOTS

Some of the methods of control here outlined are applicable to all three species of bots; these are, of course, most important in regions where all of the species occur.

#### USE OF REPELLENTS

Many requests are received for suggestions as to what may be used to keep botflies away from work horses. Although the various species of botflies seem to be fairly sensitive to certain repellents, there is some practical difficulty in keeping all the parts subject to attack covered with a repellent. This is especially true of the muzzle of the horse. It is probable that, by using a repellent beneath the jaws and on the shoulders, forelegs, and flanks, animals may be protected to some extent from the throat botfly and common botfly. The flies are thus forced to go to untreated animals or to deposit their eggs on portions of the animal to which the repellent has not been applied. The writers have found that for about four days after application a mixture of equal parts of pine tar and lard will keep the flies from laying eggs on the treated parts. They also obtained good results by applying to the hair of horses with a brush a mixture consisting of pine tar  $3\frac{3}{4}$  ounces, kerosene  $1\frac{1}{4}$  ounces, laundry soap 1 ounce, powdered resin 1 ounce, and hot water to make 14 ounces. The pine tar is thinned with the kerosene, the soap and resin are dissolved in hot water, and the two mixtures poured together. Too much dependence should not be placed on repellents, since they are at best only a means of lessening the annoyance caused by the flies, and of reducing the infestation of bots.

#### PROTECTIVE DEVICES

The use on horses of light blankets, nets, and the like tends to aid the animals in fighting botflies, but these devices do not afford adequate protection. In the case of horses in harness it is possible to prevent the deposition of eggs by the nose botfly and the throat botfly, thus avoiding the great annoyance caused by these flies and eliminating the insect as an internal parasite. In regions where the nose botfly is well established the use of some sort of nose protector is imperative when horses are being worked or ridden. Certain devices have been tested for use on animals on pasture, but, on account of the difficulty of keeping them in good repair, they have not become generally adopted. One type developed and tested by the Bureau of Entomology (fig. 7) gave excellent protection against all three species of bots, seeming to lack only in dura-

bility; this defect might be overcome by a change of materials in its construction. The best results were found by making the mouth guard of half-inch hardwood boards. When the head is held up the lips are completely protected. The block causes the mouth protector to swing back when the head is lowered and allow the animal to graze without interference. The throat is covered by duck, which, being attached to the back of the mouth protector, completely pre-

vents attack from the throat botfly as well as from the nose botfly. Furthermore, this device prevents the animal from taking into the mouth the common bots while attempting to bite or scratch itself.

In regions where the nose botfly occurs, fringes of leather or burlap are used to a considerable extent about the noses of horses at work. These are objectionable, since they give partial protection only, and may interfere with breathing. Wire baskets placed over the horses' noses and attached to the bridles are popular, but are objectionable in that they become clogged and interfere with breathing, especially if the horses are being worked near threshing machines or in other dusty places. If the baskets fit closely to the lips, flies may

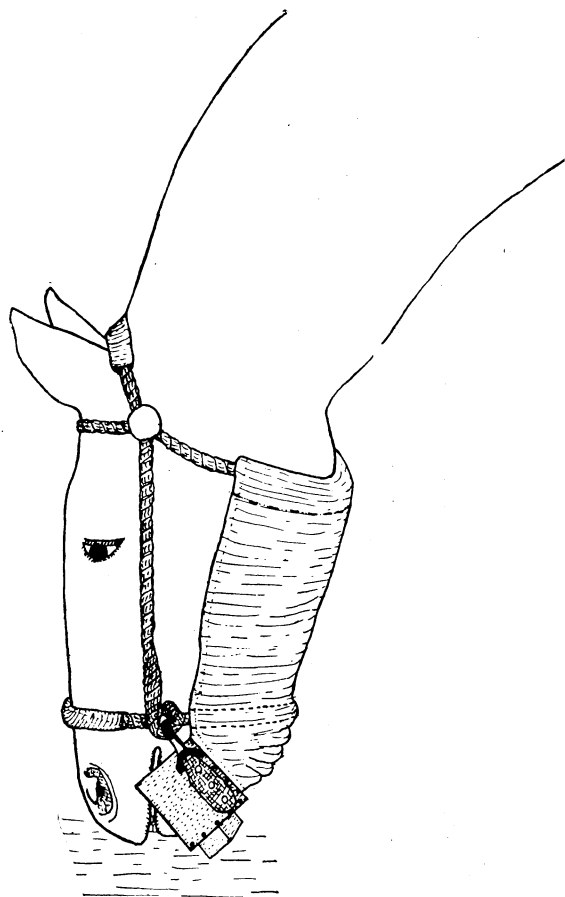


FIGURE 7.—Device for protecting horses on pasture from infestation with bots

deposit eggs through the mesh of the screen. Sometimes flies actually get inside of the baskets.

One of the simplest, cheapest, and most effective protectors for use against the nose botfly consists of a piece of leather or belting about 4 to 6 inches wide. This is attached at each end to the bit rings by a string or snap so that the entire lips, including the corners, are protected. (Fig. 8.) Many of these are now sold commercially, and are said to be highly satisfactory. A large degree of protection from

the throat botfly can be secured by suspending under the jaws a piece of canvas or burlap, extending from the throat latch to the bit rings.

Probably the most dependable method of protecting horses on pasture against the attack of the nose botfly is to provide fairly deep sheds to which they may retreat. The flies do not enter very dense shade. This method will give some protection against the other two kinds of botflies, but less effectively, as these flies will sometimes pursue the animals to shaded places and then lay eggs on them.

#### REMOVAL OF NOSE BOTS FROM THE RECTUM

Many horsemen have suggested the idea of mechanically removing the bots from the anus, or of administering enemas for the purpose of destroying them in the rectum. Because the bots are exposed for a short time only, and appear during the busy season, mechanical removal of them has not been found successful. Much soreness about the anus is caused by pulling the bots off. The nose bots have been found very resistant to mild treatments administered in the form of enemas. Nicotine sulphate will destroy them, but on account of its poisonous properties its use is questionable.

#### DESTRUCTION OF BOTFLY EGGS

Practically all authors writing on the subject of horse bots have made suggestions as to the removal or destruction of the eggs. It seems possible to effect a high degree of control by systematically applying washes which will kill young larvae in the eggs. In practice, however, this does not succeed, since some horses are nearly always on pasture during the fly season and are not regularly treated. A thorough treatment of even the work animals at intervals of five or six days is rather laborious and is likely to be neglected.

One of the old recommendations for destroying eggs was to apply kerosene oil lightly to the infested parts with a rag or brush. Tests have shown that kerosene will destroy very few of the eggs; therefore its use is not recommended.

A 2 per cent solution of any of the standard coal-tar creosote dips applied with a rag to the eggs on the hair will kill a very high percentage of the larvae and young embryos within them. A wash containing 2 per cent of carbolic acid has given very good results. It is best to apply the solution with a mop made of a rag tied on

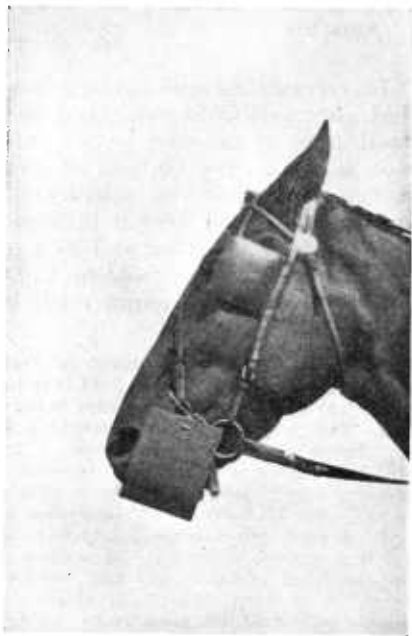


FIGURE 8.—Device for protecting horses in harness from the attack of nose botflies

a stick, and not to rub the materials in, as repeated rubbing will injure the skin on the hands and may slightly burn the horses.

Singeing the eggs with a torch and using clippers to remove them have been advocated by some. Although such treatments will destroy many of the young bots before hatching, the use of the dips mentioned above is much more thorough and is less laborious.

Attention is directed to the fact that, in the case of the common bot at least, seven days must pass after the eggs are laid before they are ready to hatch, and that many of the little bots may remain alive within the eggs for periods approximating three months. Any treatment designed to control the pest by the destruction of the eggs must be repeated at intervals during the period of egg laying, but not more frequently than once in six days.

#### ADMINISTRATION OF CARBON DISULPHIDE TO HORSES FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF BOTS

Investigations conducted a number of years ago in Italy showed that bots within horses could be destroyed by administering carbon disulphide in capsules to the infested animals. This treatment has been tested by the Bureau of Animal Industry and by veterinarians in many parts of the world and found to be very efficacious. The destruction of the bots is brought about by the action of the carbon disulphide in solution and as a gas, which poisons the bots, causing them to release their hold on the walls of the stomach and intestines.

The treatment recommended by the Bureau of Animal Industry is as follows:

Fast the animal from noon of the day preceding treatment until 6 or 7 o'clock of the next morning. At this time the animal is given carbon disulphide in gelatin capsules, the capsules being given by hand or by means of a balling gun. The dose for a horse weighing about 1,000 pounds is 1 dose of 6 drams, or 2 doses of 4 drams each with a 2-hour interval between doses, or 3 doses of 3 drams each with a 1-hour interval between doses. Do not feed or water for 3 hours after treatment. As a rule the single-dose treatment is most satisfactory, but if there is any question as to the animal's ability to tolerate the dose, divided doses may be given and the treatment suspended if bad effects follow a partial treatment. The dose should be diminished for smaller animals, and yearling colts should not receive over half the quantities given above. Very old or weak horses, or those suffering from febrile or debilitating diseases are sometimes poor risks for treatment. The carbon disulphide should not be followed by a purgative, and oil is especially undesirable. Preliminary purgation the evening before treatment is advisable only in the case of a constipated animal. The bots may continue to pass out for over two weeks after treatment.

In view of the fact that carbon disulphide is a poison, intended to poison the bots, and one which may cause unpleasant results or even death if given unskillfully or administered to animals having disease conditions which make the treatment unsafe, it is always advisable to have the treatment given by a competent veterinarian whenever possible. Serious consequences have resulted when poorly trained men used makeshift balling guns. When a capsule breaks in a horse's mouth and the carbon disulphide gets into the lungs, the horse may die.

A very important consideration in obtaining the best results is the matter of time of treatment. Carbon disulphide will remove many bots when administered at any time of the year, but the greatest efficiency can be obtained by treatment in winter months, preferably December or January. If treatment is administered before the botflies disappear in the fall the horses may become reinfested,

or some of the newly hatched throat bots may be in the gullet and thus escape the treatment. It has been found that some of the nose-fly bots begin soon after February 1 to pass backward into the rectum, where they can not be reached with the internal treatment. In the Southern States, January is the best month for treatment, as botflies may appear and lay eggs on horses in December. Another argument in favor of early winter treatment is that the horses, by being freed from the parasites early, will pass the winter in better condition.

In connection with the administration of carbon disulphide, a point of decided importance is the application of a wash, as previously described, to destroy the eggs. This wash should be very thoroughly applied to all parts of the animals where eggs occur, otherwise the young bots from them will be taken into the animal and reinfest the stomach.

It should be borne in mind also that although few bots may be seen to be passed as a result of the early winter treatment, they are nevertheless destroyed. At this time of year, because of their small size and reddish color, they are less conspicuous and are easily overlooked.

#### COMMUNITY EFFORT IN BOT CONTROL

In the last few years a number of communities have attempted bot control by systematic treatment of all donkeys, mules, horses, and colts. In no case has the work been thorough enough to justify hope of complete eradication, but the results as reported by the farmers in the areas treated have been most gratifying. Not only has annoyance from nose botflies and other botflies been greatly decreased after a single year's effort, but a general improvement has been reported in the condition and health of the horses.

It appears to be entirely feasible, especially in districts where there are very few horses on pasture, to eradicate horse bots by a combination of the carbon-disulphide treatment and the application of washes for the destruction of the eggs. For all except the extreme southern portion of the United States, December is the best month for this work. Along with the carbon-disulphide treatment every horse should be thoroughly washed with a 2 per cent coal-tar creosote dip, to destroy the young bots which remain dormant in the eggs. Any colt dropped before the last botflies have been killed by freezing temperatures is subject to infestation and should be treated. In fact, colts may become slightly infested from the eggs on the dam, even after all botflies have disappeared in the fall.

It is theoretically possible to destroy all bots in an area where the work is thoroughly done, but in practice such results can hardly be expected. It is firmly believed, however, that by treating all horses, mules, and colts for two or three years complete eradication will be accomplished.

From an economical point of view there is every reason for giving the treatment properly and thoroughly. The active interest of the county agricultural agents and various farm and livestock organizations and the cooperation of competent local veterinarians are essential.



The question of reinfestation of the cleaned area naturally comes to mind. The greatest source of reinfestation would no doubt be untreated horses brought into the treated area, but this could be largely controlled. The distance the botflies can travel is a question which can not be settled easily. Although they may follow horses along roads for some distance, it seems very doubtful whether they go more than half a mile. It may be concluded safely that even though the bots are not completely eradicated from an area, the treatment, especially if conducted on a community basis, is very profitable, the annoyance from the nose botfly and throat botfly being greatly reduced and the ill effects of the bots on the horses practically eliminated.

Undoubtedly systematic and thorough work as herein outlined would be profitable in any part of the United States, but its need is most felt in the North Central States and certain States of the Rocky Mountain region where the nose botfly has become thoroughly established. Such systematic work in the region infested by the nose botfly would give not only immediate large returns for the money and time invested, but if generally adopted would go far toward checking the spread of this most troublesome pest.